

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification by re-writing the one-paragraph section entitled "Field of the Invention" beginning at page 2, line 5, of the specification as follows:

The present invention is directed to an improved anchoring device for joining adjacent boards, e.g. decking systems, more specifically, the invention is an anchoring device, as well as a system containing an anchoring device and decking boards in combination. The system provides the ability for pre-setting distances between adjacent boards and attaching to at least one joint joist board while securing at least one adjacent board. Thus, the anchoring device physically joins two adjacent boards in the same plane to a third, supporting board.

Please amend the specification by re-writing the two paragraphs added by way of the amendment entered February 12, 2009. Said paragraphs in turn replaced two paragraphs of the original specification, which were found at page 26, line 14, through page 27, line 4. The re-written paragraphs follow:

FIG. 7 shows a cross-sectional, ~~end~~ view of ~~the~~a modified embodiment of present invention device shown in FIGS. 1 through 3 but being attached to a joist and a first deck board and a second deck board where both deck boards are supported by that joist; and

FIG. 8 shows a cross-sectional, ~~end~~ view of a preferred present invention decking system board.

Please amend the specification by re-writing the paragraph originally presented at page 31, line 14, through page 32, line 7, with the following:

FIG. 7 shows present invention anchoring device 51 in use. The cross-section presented in FIG. 7 is taken in a plane generally perpendicular to the long direction of horizontal beams (decking boards) 45 and 47 and the long direction of anchoring device 51 and generally parallel to the sides of joist beam 59. Anchoring device 51 is inserted into pre-cut slot 55 of horizontal beam 45, shown in its end view of cut wood 75. A staple, nail or screw is passed through anchoring device 51 into joist beam 59. Large staples are preferred and simplest for attachment. This anchor attaches device 51 to joist beam 59 and establishes the elevation of top element 2 so as to match with slot 55. As depicted in FIG. 7, the cross-section of anchoring device 51 may include a bottom portion having slightly curved sides to accommodate use in decking installations in which the decking boards have curved sides, such as those of the upper portion 61 and the lower portion 63 of the sides of decking board 45, as shown in FIG. 8.

Please amend the specification by re-writing the paragraph originally presented at page 33, line 6, through page 34, line 3, with the following:

FIG. 8 shows a detailed end-cross-sectional view of beam 45 from FIG. 7, the cross-section being taken in a plane generally perpendicular to the long direction of beam 45. This is a preferred component of the present invention decking system. As can be seen, the slot 55 represents a midpoint or approximate midpoint imaginary line 65 divides the beam into an upper or top portion 67, and a lower or bottom portion 69. As can be seen, the top portion 67 has a greater width W_{TB} , than the bottom portion W_{BB} . This provides for tightness of the anchoring device, increases stability and hides more of the anchoring device from a top view, enabling tight top portion beam spacing, yet enabling thicker anchoring devices for strength and stability.